



The Lee Wiggins Childcare
CUSTOMER SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY
PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre (LWCC) is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring that participants and clients with disabilities receive accessible programs and services with the same quality and timelines as others do, wherever possible. LWCC supports the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all our programs and services as set out in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001* and the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005*.

It is acknowledged that providing accessible programs and services at LWCC where the building itself is not accessible is a great challenge and sometimes not possible. Where this is the case, LWCC is committed to ensuring appropriate referrals.

We are further committed to ensuring that our policies, practices and procedures comply with the following core principles:

1. Dignity and Independence – Goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities at all times.
2. Integration – The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities will be integrated with the provision of goods and services to others unless alternative measures are required, on a temporary or permanent basis, to allow persons with disabilities to benefit.
3. Equal Opportunity – Persons with disabilities will be given equal opportunity to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from goods and services.

Any policy of LWCC that does not respect and promote dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.



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Definitions

“Assistive Device” - Is any device used to assist a person with a disability in performing a task or tasks or to provide assistance in the activities of daily living.

“Disability” - As per the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act* means:

- a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*

“Persons with Disability” - Is any person who has a disability as defined under the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

“Service Animal” – An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,

- a. if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability;
or
- b. if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

“Support Person” - A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

“We”, “Our” and “Staff” - Refers to LWCC and its employees, volunteers and/or contractors.



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Assistive Devices

It is our policy to allow people to use their personal assistive devices to access our services wherever possible. In the event LWCC provides assistive devices, we will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with those assistive devices to assist our customers in accessing our services.

If a person with a disability is unable to use their personal assistive device or one provided by LWCC, we will use our best effort to provide an alternative means of assistance to allow that person to access our services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disabilities. LWCC may request information regarding an individual's limitations and/or restrictions as is reasonable and necessary for the purpose of determining the feasibility of an accommodation or providing the most appropriate accommodation. Any information provided will be held in strict confidence and only shared with the Coordinator for the purposes of assessing and/or providing an appropriate accommodation.

Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a service animal, we will ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless the service animal is otherwise excluded by law.

Where a service animal must be excluded, LWCC will explain why this is the case and attempt, to the extent possible, to use other methods to provide assistance to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use and benefit from the Centre's services. The service animal must be under the care and control of the individual at all times.

If a health and safety concern presents itself, for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, the Centre will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.



The Lee Wiggins Childcare CUSTOMER SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Support Person

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises and, when possible, on field trips.

Where there are costs or admission fees associated with field trips or other events either on or off LWCC premises, notice regarding the requirement of such payment and the amount of the payment will be provided in advance.

Accommodations may be made for individuals with support persons in advance of training seminars or events at the discretion of the Coordinator.

We may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when at LWCC, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others in the facility.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

LWCC will communicate to the public when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access the programs and services are unavailable.

Any notice of disruption will include the following information:

- a. That a service is unavailable;
- b. The reason for the disruption;
- c. The anticipated duration of the disruption;
- d. Alternative services, if available.

LWCC staff will provide such notice by posting the information in a conspicuous location within the LWCC premises.



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Staff Training

LWCC will provide training as required under the AODA to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public on our behalf, as well as to those who develop customer service policies and related practices and procedures for the LWCC.

Training will include:

- The purpose of the *Accessibilities of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- How to use any assistive devices or equipment provided by LWCC to help people with disabilities to access our programs and services;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing programs and services;
- Familiarization with LWCC policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of programs or services to persons with disabilities; and
- Ongoing training that will occur on an as needed basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

The degree and format of training provided will be tailored to suit each individual's interactions with participants or clients and his or her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of programs and services. Training will be provided as soon as practicable after a person is assigned to the role to which the training requirements apply.

LWCC will keep records of the training provided, which will include the dates when training occurs and the number of persons trained.

Contractors and consultants providing services on behalf of LWCC to participants or clients will be required to ensure their staff has the appropriate training.



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Feedback Process

To ensure the best service possible, LWCC invites individuals who wish to provide feedback, and if necessary, file a complaint on the way LWCC provides services to people with disabilities.

Feedback may be provided to the Co-ordinator/Coordinator of the Centre in writing via email and/or hard copy.

Complaints should be made directly in writing to our Board of Directors and submitted to the Coordinator.

Complaints will be addressed according to our organization's regular complaint management/conflict resolution policies and procedures. These policies are available to any member of the public upon request. Clients can expect a written response to their feedback and/or complaint within 30 days.

Notice of Availability of Documents

We will provide the public notice of the availability of the documents, required by the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, (O. Reg 429/07) upon request.

Notice of availability will be provided on our website and/or will be posted at a conspicuous location at LWCC.

Format of Documents

If we are required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, we will take into account the person's ability to access the information and will provide the document or information contained in the document in a format that meets those needs as agreed upon with the person.